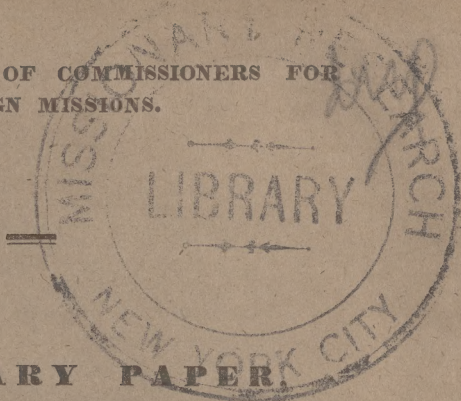


AMERICAN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR
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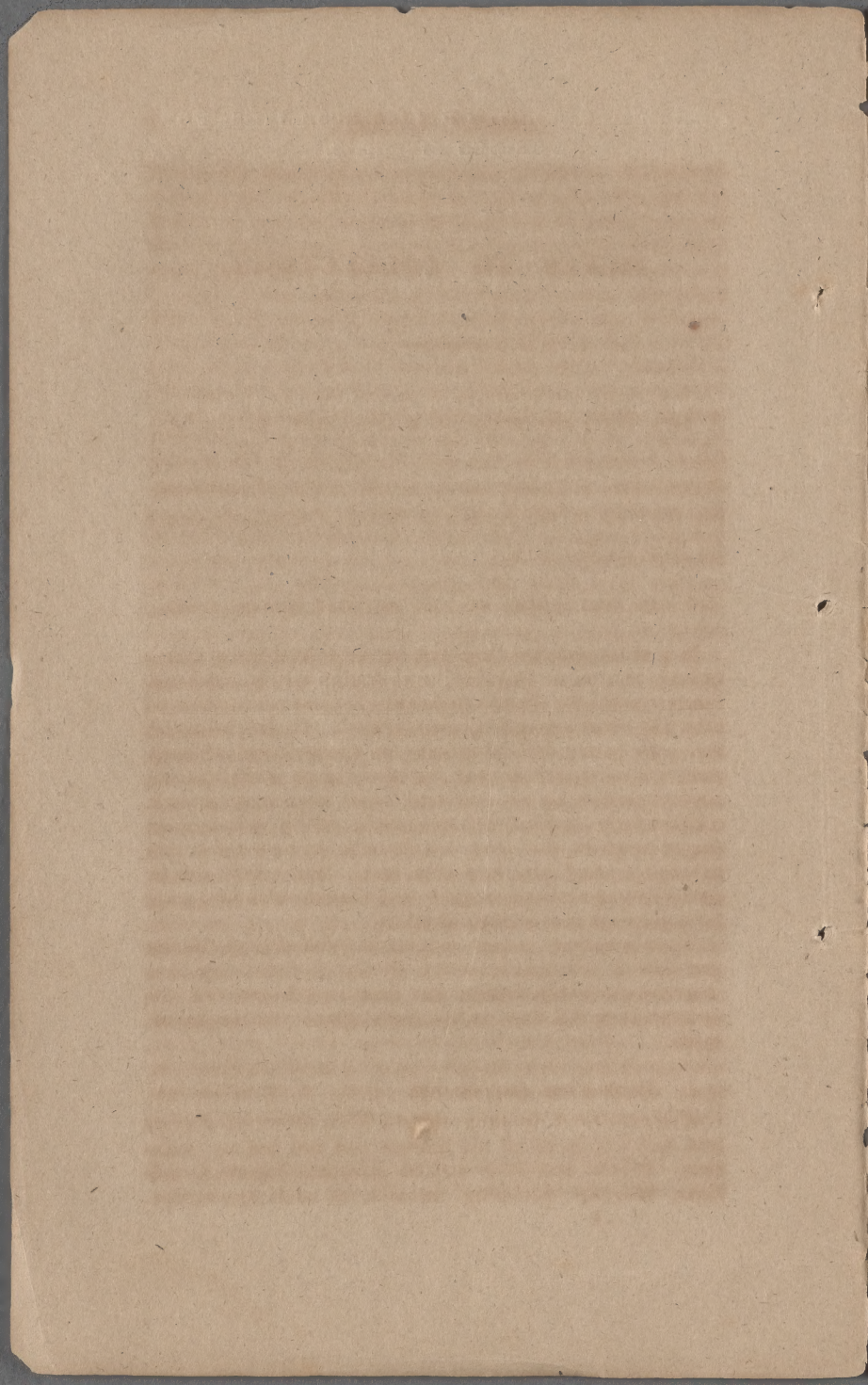
MISSIONARY PAPER

No. II.

HINTS TO COLLECTORS.

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HINTS TO COLLECTORS

A FEW Hints are embodied in this Paper, for the benefit of those persons who are appointed by the several Associations to collect funds in aid of the Missions under the care of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.

TO THE COLLECTORS OF THE SEVERAL ASSOCIATIONS.

It is recommended that, just before commencing solicitations, you meet together, read these hints in company, concert plans for simultaneous and efficient operation, and seek the direction and blessing of God. It may be hoped that your pastor will be present to counsel and animate you; and that, when you are ready to go forth, he will himself preach, or request some other minister to preach, a Missionary Sermon; at the close of which public notice might be given, that you are about to wait on the people at their several places of residence. Thus will you be strengthened and encouraged; and the way will be opened for a pleasant and successful effort.

Your attention is now respectfully called to the duties you owe to yourselves as the agents of your respective Associations,—the duties you owe to others—and the inducements you have to the discharge of your important work.

1. DUTIES TO YOURSELVES.

Feel interested in your object—This object is a great one, and worthy of all the interest you can feel and manifest. It is to make the way of salvation known to millions, who are perishing for lack of such knowledge.

This is the grand design of missionary efforts. Whatever is attempted, is with a view to this result. Preachers, Bibles, and tracts are sent to bring the heathen into the Way of Salvation; and with reference to this same end, printing presses are established, schools instituted, colleges founded, and secular labors undertaken, by the missionaries. Meditate on this great object—pray over it—converse about it—read respecting it; till it seems, as it is, immeasurably great and glorious, worth all the labors and self-denials you can bestow, and a thousand times more.

Understand what you are to do—You are the *agents* of the Association to which you belong. Your business is to solicit, contributions, as one of the necessary and appropriate means of hastening the spread of the gospel among the heathen. The field of your labor is prescribed and its limits are defined. You know of whom you are to solicit. Let your requests be for the present year, and for that only. You will take no subscriptions, no pledges, for the next and succeeding years. Those years will take care of themselves. Your subscriptions, pledges, donations, are only for the existing year; though it is hoped and believed that donors will cheerfully receive a similar application in the next. Obtain for the missionary cause as much as you can, by the use of a proper influence. If the subscription be paid immediately, you will be saved the trouble of calling again. Aim to finish your collections in season, so that you may pay the money to the Treasurer of the Association, and it may pass to the general treasury without unnecessary delay. In ordinary cases, the Collectors will do their work more thoroughly and successfully, if they resolve to complete it in a week or ten days, than if they allow themselves two or three months. Beside the sooner the collections are made, the sooner the money will be applied to the great object for which it is given. Where the gentlemen are embodied in one Association, and the ladies in another, (as will generally be the case,) the two sexes will act independently. Ladies will not in common cases, solicit from gentlemen, nor gentlemen from ladies. The Collectors pay over their collections to the Treasurer of their Association; that officer pays to the Treasurer of the Auxiliary Society; and from thence, the amount, accumulated from different Associations, goes to the Parent Institution—the AMERICAN

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR FOREIGN MISSIONS.

Should any person give \$10, or upwards, during one year to the Association, such a person is entitled to the *Missionary Herald* for one year, that is to one volume; and, if the person so contributing desires it, the Collector to whom the money is paid should be careful to inform the Treasurer, in order that the *Herald* may be sent accordingly. If either of you collect \$15 in one year, that sum, when paid to your Treasurer, entitles you, also, to a volume of the *Herald*, and the Treasurer should see that it is sent to you. But these copies of the *Herald* cannot be sent to donors and collectors, unless the names are communicated in some way to the Treasurer of the Board.

Whenever you think a subscriber may be obtained for the *Missionary Herald*, you can propose the taking of that work; and if you succeed, your amount of usefulness will be increased.*

This is a brief view of your duties as Collectors. They are simple and plain. The nature of your work is obvious.

Be able to answer objections.—You will be likely to hear them made; and if they are new to you, and you have not thought of an answer to them, they may disconcert you, and perhaps discourage you. Think, then, of this,—that those who have had most to do with missions, and feel the most zeal in them, and venture most for them, have generally been most in the way of hearing objections, and have known most about them. Why are not they alarmed and discouraged? Because they know, that the objections can all be answered, and that the most important of them have been answered a thousand times. In general, to overthrow the objections brought against missions, requires only some knowledge of the history of missions and of the moral condition of the world. If it is said that the heathen stand in no need of the gospel, such knowledge will show that they are in perishing need of it. If it is asserted that missions have done no good, such knowledge will show that there is not a nation in Christendom, which owes not its Christianity to missions; and

* A Paper containing considerations designed to promote the circulation of the *Missionary Herald*, may be obtained gratuitously at the Missionary Rooms in Boston, or of Mr. Jesse Talbot, Agent of the Board, Chapel of the Brick Church, New York,

that the missions of the present age, considering the number of missionaries, have been very successful, and are now in a high degree promising. If it is declared, that foreign missions tend to divert the public attention from domestic missions, such knowledge will show, that the fact has been quite the reverse. And so of the rest. Most of them are grounded upon ignorance or misapprehension of facts. But the grand answer, that sweeps away every objection to sending the gospel to the heathen, is found in the command of the Lord Jesus Christ to make known the gospel "IN ALL THE WORLD—TO EVERY CREATURE." This command stands unrepealed; it cannot be evaded; it is binding on every one who enjoys the gospel.*

Be familiar with the strongest motives for contributing to the support of missions to the heathen.—Consume no more time than is necessary in answering objections and never start objections yourselves. While replying to them, you are acting only on the defensive, and your conquests must be limited. Rather present, when you can do it, the motives to Christian liberality unconnected with objections, and in their most attractive forms. Acquaint yourselves fully with these. Read often the eight and ninth chapters of the second epistle to the Corinthians. Think, as the apostle Paul did, of the motives to be drawn from the liberality of others whose ability is smaller than ours—from the importance of deeds of charity to consistency of character in a Christian—from the bountiful reward which follows a cheerful giver—from the blessings secured by the prayers of those who are relieved by our benevolence—and, above all, from the love and condescension of the Lord Jesus Christ, who, 'though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we, through his poverty, might be rich.' Here are motives exactly fitted to act on a pious soul. But these are not all. Look back, and see what Christianity did for our fathers; look around, and see what it has done for us; look forward, and see what prospects of blissful enjoyment through countless ages it opens to all who obey its commands and thankfully receive its offers. Then look abroad, and survey the sin and misery which fill the earth with lamentations. Behold

* Papers containing answers to several common objections, and also an illustration and enforcement of the command of Christ, may be had gratuitously of the Treasurer of the Board, or of the Agent in New York city.

the hundreds of millions who give every proof of possessing unsanctified hearts, and of being unfit for heaven. Standing among these unhappy millions, glance your eyes forward through the generations to come. What will be the character of those generations? Can any enter heaven who die unholy? And will the generations to come, be holier than their fathers? The salvation of the heathen must depend upon their having the gospel, which is the grand instrument designed by the Most High God for renewing the hearts of men and fitting them for his presence; and whether the heathen shall enjoy the gospel, depends, according to all the known plans and principles of the divine government, on the will of those who possess the gospel. Will any one, then, take upon himself the responsibility of withholding his aid?*

With these and other similar considerations be familiar. They will stimulate you; and perhaps you may occasionally find them useful in reference to others.

II. DUTIES TO OTHERS.

Several of these have necessarily been mentioned under the first general division of these Hints. Your attention will now be directed to two or three more.

Give to every one an opportunity to contribute.—Deprive no one of the privilege. It is to the poor no less a privilege to contribute their aid for the spread of the gospel, than it is to the rich. The pious poor feel it to be such. They find happiness in doing it; withhold not this happiness. They claim it as their right; give them the opportunity of using their right. Are there *opposers*, and will they treat you with civility? Perhaps you will do well to call on them. A respectful visit of this kind can do no harm, and may do good. Remember that there are few who are not displeased with neglect. Let no one have occasion to say, in the little territory assigned you, "I might, perhaps, have given, but the Collector thought me unworthy of a call."

Rely solely on proper motives.—In presenting motives, resort to none but such as are right. If right motives, suitably urged, will not avail, you have nothing further to

* See a Paper showing when a Christian may be said to have done his duty to the heathen;—to be procured as stated in the previous note.

say. You will regret the necessity, but must be content, in such cases, to obtain nothing. But you should sit in judgment on the motives of no one; nor be forward to suspect ill, either of him who grants, or of him who denies, your request.

Aim to conciliate the good will of all.—For your aid in this thing, the following suggestions are given.

Urge no one.—By this is not meant that you should not be in earnest, or that you should never argue and plead. It suggests that you should not go too far; that you should stop in the right place. Your duty may be discharged without offending reasonable people, and there is nothing gained by giving offence. Pursue your solicitations only so long as you are heard patiently. Better not get any thing than obtain it at the expense of the good will of the donor. But be not timid; and never seem indifferent whether you succeed or not in your object. Remember that nothing is so likely to offend as *heartless* solicitation, *cold* argumentation, *lifeless* pertinacity. Throw your whole soul into your applications, and then, if they should happen to be continued somewhat too long, you will be more readily forgiven.

Hear objections patiently.—This will tend to conciliate the objector; and your reply will be the wiser and more forcible for the delay.

If you reply, do it respectfully.—Let the objections adduced appear to strike you with their proper force. Seem not to think lightly of the judgment of their author, or of his knowledge or candor. As a "soft answer turneth away wrath," so does a respectful answer disarm prejudice.

Should you argue, do it coolly.—Be animated and earnest, but lose not your self-possession. Rather than lose this, cease to argue.

Be frank.—Make no more of an argument, nor less of an objection, than it is worth. Assume not that missionaries, or the conductors of missions, are perfect men. They have like passions with other good men. Neither assume that missions are conducted in an infallible manner. The most you should affirm is, that the plan of them is the best that has occurred to the most wise and excellent men in Christendom, and is in imitation of the plan pursued by the apostles in the missions of their day. You may add, that if any one knows of a better system, he will

confer a great favor in communicating the knowledge of it to the directors of missions, who will receive such a communication very thankfully, and give it all due attention. But it will not be thought disrespectful, if they require it to be supported by at least a few well authenticated facts, before they substitute it for the one now in operation; especially as the latter has been acted upon for so long a time, and with no small success.

Disparage no other objects of charity.—That species of Christian charity, which is the object of your Association, is not inferior in importance to any other; and its importance is superior to that of most others. Thus you may lawfully regard it, because such is the fact. But avoid instituting comparisons; unless it be necessary to show that missions have an *equal* claim with any other department of the great work of benevolence. None has a greater claim; but it will seldom, if ever, be expedient to argue that any particular object has less. Never regard the great works of Christian benevolence as in their nature opposed to each other. Missionary, Bible, Tract, Education, and sabbath-school societies all have the same great object in view.

Repeat nothing to the disadvantage of any one.—Should you hear, while discharging your duty, indiscreet remarks inappropriate objections, or strange misstatements of matters of fact, repeat them not. Be ‘wise as serpents,’ but ‘harmless as doves.’

Consider the disposition, learning, age, and standing of those of whom you solicit.—The same mode of solicitation will not do for all. The mode should be suited to the various characters and circumstances of persons.

In short, be interested in your object; understand your work; be fortified against the paralyzing influence of objections on yourselves, and know how to lessen their influence on others; act in harmonious co-operation with other benevolent societies and objects; injure no one; and prosecute your most commendable enterprise with zeal, prudence, patience, and with a wise adaptation of means to the circumstances in which you must use them, and to the end you have in view.

III.—INDUCEMENTS.

Your cause is good.—There is no better cause in this world. The promotion of literature, the sciences, and arts is commendable, and worthy of any man. The extension of civil freedom and of enlightened principles of legislation is a noble cause, and deserving of the highest efforts of the greatest minds. But the cause in which you are engaged is more excellent and noble than these. It is that of eradicating evil—of sweeping from the earth the sources of human wo. It is the cause which animated Martyn, Buchanan, Swartz, Brainerd, and Elliot,—which supported reformers, confessors, and martyrs—for which the apostles toiled and cheerfully surrendered their lives—and on account of which the Lord Jesus came down from heaven. The moral reformation of every individual, and family, and tribe and kingdom, in the earth! How vast the object, how excellent, how dignified! How worthy of the vigorous and constant endeavors of every man, in every condition, from the cottage to the throne.

Your plan of operations is wise.—So it has been pronounced by multitudes of intelligent friends of missions in various parts of our land. In England also, the excellence of a plan essentially similar has been fully proved. It is such an organization as this, in general, that gives to the British and Foreign Bible Society an annual income of 400,000 dollars, to the Church Missionary Society, to the Wesleyan Missionary Society, and to the London Missionary Society, about 200,000 dollars each, with a gradual yearly augmentation. Thus it may be in this country, if there is but a proper organization. Let the plan you have adopted be but carried into full effect, and it would bring every friend of the Lord Jesus into the ranks. It would do more. It would *organize* this vast body like a host prepared for war.

And this enlargement and organization of the armies of Immanuel can be effected, to a very great extent. Many ecclesiastical societies and towns, and many counties have already come into the plan: it is generally approved; and is applicable, with some modifications, to the whole country.

And how consistent, also, are the duties prescribed by the system, with all that is becoming in domestic society? When rightly distributed, these duties can interfere with no paramount duties. They coincide, too, with all the proprieties of life, when taken in their most rigid construction. The sphere of action prescribed for the female, is wholly among her own sex. She is not obliged to give herself undue publicity, nor often to go out of the circle of her acquaintance.

Finally: *Much depends on you.*—You are delegated to act for the Association. It looks to your industry and zeal for its funds. Their amount will depend much on you. You have it in your power greatly to increase or diminish the missionary spirit, in the members of the Association, and to do much good or harm. If you are faithful to your trust, there is no fear but that all will go well. If you are unfaithful, there is no doubt but the Association will decline. Moreover, a missionary spirit is the true spirit of piety, the spirit of revivals of religion, and of every good work. If then, you are faithful, you may greatly promote piety in general; may hasten a revival of religion; may lead to a more cheerful and abundant support of religious ordinances, and will certainly aid the cause of Sabbath schools, domestic missions, the education of young men for the ministry, and the circulation of Bibles and tracts over the world. But if you should not be faithful—which may God forbid—your influence will tend to hinder the prosperity of every one of these most excellent objects.

Be of good cheer. There is little to discourage, and much to animate you. You will be more kindly received than perhaps you dare expect. You have God and the hearts of his people, and the consciences of all men, on your side.

Money is much needed, and it will be needed more and more, from year to year. The present missionary stations cannot be enlarged, and new ones cannot be formed, without an augmentation of funds. For this augmentation, the Missionaries, the Board, the Auxiliaries, the Associations, and the Churches, all look, with much solicitude, chiefly to you.

MISSIONARY HERALD.

A volume of this work is *presented*, by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, as follows:

To every Collector, who collects, for the missions of the Board, during any year, a sum not less than *fifteen* dollars.

To the Treasurer of every Society or Association that contributes to the Board, during one year, any sum not less than *twenty* dollars.

To every Clergyman, who maintains regularly in his congregation the Monthly Concert, at which collections are made, during one year, and contributed to the board, amounting to not less than *fifteen* dollars.

To every Individual, who desires it, contributing to the Board, in any year, not less than *ten* dollars.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE BOARD.

A copy of this publication will be presented to every association that contributes, during one year, any sum not less than *twenty* dollars.

Wherever it is practicable, Individual Donors, Collectors, and Associations are requested to procure the copies of the *Missionary Herald*, and of the Report, to which they become entitled, through the Treasurers of the respective Auxiliary Societies with which they are connected. Treasurers of Associations should inform the Treasurers of the Auxiliary Societies how many volumes of the *Herald*, and how many numbers of the Report, are due to their respective Associations, and to whom they should be sent, and by what conveyance. These notices the Treasurer of the Auxiliary Society will transmit to the Treasurer of the Board at the Missionary Rooms, who will cause these works to be sent as requested.

CONSTITUTION OF AN ASSOCIATION.

Article 1. The object of this Association is to aid the Missions under the direction of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.

Art. 2. All _____ belonging to

_____ and contributing to this cause, shall be members of the Association, until they shall decline making a donation at the subsequent annual call of the Collectors.

Art. 3. The Association shall elect, annually, a President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and a suitable number of Collectors.

Art. 4. The President, and in absence the Vice President, shall preside in all meetings of the Association, and shall have power to call special meetings at pleasure.

The Secretary shall keep the records, manage the correspondence, and, at the annual meeting, make a general report of what has been accomplished by the Association, in the course of the preceding year.

The Treasurer shall take charge of the money collected; and shall pay the same to the Treasurer of the Auxiliary Society of

, as soon as convenient after any considerable sum shall have been placed in his hands. He shall also present a report at the annual meeting.

Art. 5. The four officers above named, shall constitute an Executive Committee; to manage the business not otherwise appropriated by the articles of this Constitution.

Art. 6. The business of the Collectors is to solicit and receive contributions. And in order to do this most effectually, they shall make a suitable division of their appropriate labor; call upon all the individuals, who are friendly to the object, within their respective limits, and give all a respectful invitation to contribute; take their names, and the sums which they wish to give for the year and shall pay over to the Treasurer, on or before an appointed day, all that they have received. If no day shall be appointed by the Auxiliary, nor by the Association, the Collectors shall themselves appoint as early a day as they shall think convenient.

Art. 7. The annual meeting of the Association shall be held on the
and shall be opened with prayer. At this meeting, the Reports of the Secretary and Treasurer shall be read; the officers for the year ensuing shall be chosen; and such other business and services shall be attended to, as may be deemed expedient.

 DISTRICT NO.

Subscribers' Names.

Dolls. Cts.

